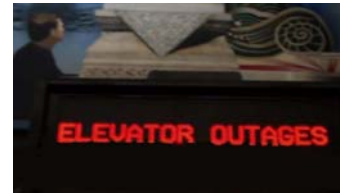


Something Can Be Done

CFC Story of the Week -- Week 5

Dr. Bob Weller pushed the up button again, but it was no use -- the elevator was out. He and his 20-year-old disabled son, Paul, were stuck on the platform at the Gallery Place Metro station. Paul sat in his wheelchair still enjoying his day with his dad as other passengers breezed up the escalator. Weller, however, stood on the terra cotta tiles as his blood pressure went up. They earlier had faced a broken elevator at Metro Center and were told to go to Mt. Vernon Square, but its elevator was out and they were told to go back to Metro Center. This useless suggestion led Weller to the Gallery Place Station -- another dead end in the maze of life faced by the disabled and their families.



Elevator outages are now posted in the Metro to reduce the havoc they still cause for the disabled.

Weller is Chief of the Social Sciences, Nursing, Epidemiology and Methods Integrated Review Group at the Center for Scientific Review. He explained that he wanted to visit his wife, who was at a downtown hotel for a weeklong conference. The station manager at Gallery Place insisted that they again go to Metro Center. There, Weller and his son found the same broken elevator and station manager, who now told them to go to Farragut North. Finally, they found a working elevator there.

"Everything is complicated," said Weller. "Paul suffered brain damage during labor and grew up with a culmination of disabilities." He has cerebral palsy and lacks fine motor skills and a sense of balance. In addition, he is legally blind and prone to seizures. He also is mildly retarded. Through all the complications, Weller and his wife, Jean, have been there for their son -- getting him the right doctors, caretakers and teachers.



Paul Weller

"He is a delightful guy," Weller counts his blessings. "He's fairly articulate and loves to talk to people . . . and he can see well enough to zoom around familiar places in his electric wheelchair." He adds that he has received help from government and charities. The [Shriners Hospital](#) in Tampa helped when others couldn't, the State of Maryland provides a part-time caretaker, and Howard County pays for Paul to attend a school run by a CFC charity, the [Maryland School for the Blind](#).

"Next year, however, we're going to need more help," said Weller. "Paul must leave school when he reaches twenty-one." Weller and his wife cannot afford to quit their jobs to look after him. "So we're looking for some kind of day program that will train him to do something worthwhile." Then, sooner or later, Paul will need to go into a residential program. Weller notes that he and his wife can no longer lift Paul into the therapy tub they built for him in their home. "I'm a healthy sixty-three," he said, "but every day I get older."



Paul and Bob Weller enjoy a weekend at home.

The state will not provide the services they will need. “We’d have to die, but I’m not ready for that.” Weller then laughs, “I haven’t caused enough trouble here yet.” In a more serious tone, he notes that his hope for the future lies in local charities: [ARC of Howard County](#), Humanim and the Athelas Institute. He, however, isn’t sure how much help he can expect. “When you visit them, you become all too aware of how short on funds and people they are.”

Weller knows what needs to be done, and he is doing what he can by making a CFC pledge. He encourages his coworkers to find and support charities that matter to them too.

Lend a Hand

**I am only one,
But still I am one.
I cannot do everything,
But still I can do something;
And because I cannot do everything
I will not refuse to do the something
that I can do.**

**Edward Everett Hale (1822-1909) -- “For the Lend-a-Hand Society”
(Also quoted by Helen Keller.)**

CFC Stories of the Week

Each week of the campaign, we will share a story that shows you how your CFC contribution can touch the lives of people you care about. We will mention a few charities along the way, but there are 3,000 charities in the CFC Catalog of Caring. More than one of them can help you make a difference to the people and causes you believe in. **[We encourage you to consider all the possibilities.](#)**

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